

Northampton May 18. 1843

My Dear Friend,

I did not receive the communication of the Ex Comd. until yesterday noon, or it would have <sup>had</sup> an earlier answer.

During the past winter I was requested by the late Ex Comd. thro the Chmn (who stated that he had consulted the Anti Slavery friends in Boston & Philadelphia), to take the editorship of the Standard upon the retirement of my dear wife. I consented and wrote to that effect. I am still of the same mind, and am willing to devote such powers as I possess to the advancement <sup>at that post</sup> of a cause on which in my opinion hangs the destiny not only of the American colored man, but also of this whole country. But I must declare that I cannot occupy that post unless I am left in full freedom to speak on all subjects connected with the Anti Slavery enterprise, as my judgment and conscience dictate. On any other terms I should be neither contented nor useful. I think moreover that it would be extremely unwise, to say no worse, for the Anti Slavery fraternity to appoint any person to an official station in whose fidelity, intelligence



and discretion they have not such confidence that they can cheerfully accord to him this liberty. The manner in which the Standard has been conducted during the last two years has with a single exception had my hearty approbation. Had I been the responsible editor I should on some occasions have admitted more controversial matter. I can perceive nothing else that I should desire to alter, or see altered if I were to remain a simple subscriber.

In respect to the political parties I agree in the main with the views expressed by the Ex Comd. but that there may <sup>be</sup> no mis understanding I will state some points on which it is possible that we may differ. Both the political parties are bad, but both have done in the Free States acts, which have deserved the commendation of abolitionists, and afforded the most substantial and cheering evidence of the success of our efforts. Whatever either may do in any State or in Congress favorable and friendly to our object, ought to be cordially and impartially acknowledged and welcomed. It is a fact however that the Whig party have made nearer approaches to our standard of political action than their opponents. This fact it would be doing injustice to men and to the cause to deny. There is neither honesty nor poli-



icy in confounding half friends with entire ene-  
mies. This half state, be it remembered, is one thro'  
which all the abolition converts, whom we hope  
to gain, must pass <sup>and thro' which we have passed.</sup> ~~there~~. It is the transition state,  
something as positive as either of the fixed, and  
quite as interesting to our cause. I know that  
it suits <sup>the purposes of the</sup> "third party" to represent both the  
great political parties as in pari delicto. It is  
a favorite tenet of the faction. It is an instrument  
to whip into their ranks honest but ignorant  
whig abolitionists. It is one and perhaps the  
most effective of the many party tricks to  
which they resort in the very worst spirit of  
the parties, which they affect to arraign.

The ~~Ex~~ <sup>work</sup> come inform me that the  
"letters from <sup>work</sup> have been disapproved" This is  
the first intimation I have had of the fact ex-  
cept from adherents of the faction above nam-  
ed. I will not undertake to say without going  
over those letters, for <sup>wh</sup> I have not now time, that  
I may not have used expressions betraying  
an undue leaning in favor of the whigs; but  
this I may say that I believe the principal  
and the most offensive portion of the corres-  
pondence, as it related to the political parties,  
consisted in giving a simple analysis of their  
votes. During two months and a half I was  
a witness of the uniform servility of the northern



section of one party and of the independence  
of the corresponding section of the other on  
every question touching slavery. Should I  
have done right to conceal this fact, and de-  
nounce both sections as equally recreant  
to their duty to the enslaved and to the free-  
men who sent them? The Emancipator  
could do that in better style than I am cap-  
able of, and ought, if this office was demand-  
ed, to have recd your patronage. I have  
not spared Henry Clay nor any slave poli-  
tician of his party. On the other hand when-  
ever a Northern democrat gave a righteous  
vote, I took special pains to report his  
name more conspicuously than that  
of any member of the opposite, because I  
thought it more meritorious to go against  
a party in favor of the slave, than to go  
with it. These were the general views with  
which I acted, and I find nothing in them  
that I can conscientiously say I wish to  
alter. If at any time an expression escap-  
ed me inconsistent with <sup>them,</sup> I should regret  
and condemn it as much as any anti-  
slavery friend or third party opponent can.



but unless such expression were specified or I had time carefully to review all that I wrote, I could make no modifications therein.

I have for several years voted for a thorough loco candidate in this county, whom I ~~also~~ knew to be also a thorough abolitionist, in preference to his whig adversary, and this in reference to a principle unalterably fixed in my mind; and I have during the same years abstained from voting, or given scattering votes, if I could find no candidate of either of the two great parties, whom I knew to be a decided abolitionist. On this principle I have never voted for John Davis, and I have been held up to the derision of my neighbors by a democratic newspaper for having voted for C. L. Remond, <sup>“a colored man”</sup> for Governor. Nevertheless I have not and do not ~~think~~ <sup>stet</sup> I ever shall “come out” of the political party ~~which I deem the least exceptionable.~~ <sup>a despotic one</sup> If that party at any time nominates an abolitionist for office, I vote for him in preference to any other, and if I think I can influence that party to propose such candidates, I do not feel that I violate any anti Slavery obligation by communicating and meeting with them. Every man who has earned the confidence of his associates by long acquaintance and good conduct, will have a weight with them that he



cannot have with new comrades nor a new  
comrade with them. The sphere of a man's  
old and familiar associations is the natur-  
al and ordinarily the most useful theatre  
of action for him in every laudable  
work. He therefore makes a considerable  
sacrifice of his means of doing good when  
~~in any sense~~ he <sup>abandons</sup> ~~departs~~ from it. There may  
be cases, I believe, when as much or more  
good can be done by renouncing both sect  
and party, and bearing a testimony against  
their errors and misdeeds. These cases I have  
always thought, and do still think, ought  
to be left to individual judgment and voli-  
tion. The salutary effect which they may have  
when they thus arise, would be neutralized if  
they could be supposed to be the result of  
dictation from abroad. I may approve in  
an individual, what I <sup>would</sup> resist as a test. This  
I think is the necessary result of the broad  
principle of <sup>our</sup> association, that it should be  
sufficiently comprehensive to embrace with-  
out distinction of color, ~~sex~~, sex or party all  
men who agree in the great object of destroy-  
ing slavery. If we require as a qualification  
for fraternizing with us, an abandonment  
of parties or sects, we abolish a fundamental  
principle, and sweep from our platform



that which distinguishes it from the new ~~from~~<sup>the</sup> ecclesiastical organizations.

With these opinions I could not undertake to advocate the renunciation of parties and sects as an Anti Slavery duty. At the same time I should not, if I were editor of the Standard exclude all discussions on such subjects. If it could be shown that on any point I am wrong, I should be perfectly willing to be corrected, and <sup>in any event</sup> that other minds should be acted upon thro the columns of the Standard. Still as the responsibility would rest on ~~me~~ me I must exercise the same <sup>liberty</sup> in choosing and rejecting, which others exercise in offering. That I should on all occasions act with a sincere and single purpose of advancing our great and good cause I take it for granted that you will believe without any new proofs or professions.

In pursuance of the understanding with the former Ex Comd. I have been making arrangements to remove to New York; and it is of the utmost importance to me to be put in possession at the earliest possible moment of your definitive determination.

I remain Yr affect.

Wm Lloyd Garrison  
Pres.  
M. W. Chapman Cor. Sec. A. A. S. D. L. Child



May 18. 1843  
Letter of Mr. Phila  
accepting the  
editorship of Standard

Please to preserve  
& return  
M.W.C.

Wm Lloyd Garrison  
President A. A. S. V.